Proposed Synopsis for Ph.D. Research on

Emotional Intelligence, Anxiety and Academic Stress among undergraduate students of Ranchi

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Submitted to

University Department of Psychology

Ranchi University, Ranchi

Jharkhand

2024

Emotional Intelligence, Anxiety and Academic Stress among undergraduate students of Ranchi

1.0 Introduction

1.1 State of art

The proposed research is designed to study emotional intelligence, anxiety and academic stress among undergraduate students of universities and colleges in Ranchi in respect to their gender (male and female) and socio-economic status (high and low) and stream (Arts and commerce). The study adopts a comparative method where emotional intelligence, anxiety and academic stress will be compared between undergraduate male and female students in relation to their socio-economic status and stream. Academic stress and strain significantly affect students' mental health and emotional well being, which has a detrimental effect on their academic performance. Emotional intelligence is a set of skills and competencies which helps students to handle the anxiety and stress of academic life. The present study will be focusing on impact of gender, socio-economic status and stream and will be comparing the level of emotional intelligence, anxiety and academic stress among the undergraduate students in relation to their gender, socio-economic status and stream.

1.2 Conceptual framework of the study

1.2.1 Concept of Emotional Intelligence

Emotional intelligence is a set of interconnected cognitive and emotional abilities (Culha and Acaroglu, 2019). Students' emotional intelligence, which is a set of abilities and competencies, determines their ability to manage academic stress and demands (Sarwar et al. 2017). Emotional intelligence is a critical factor that influences students' emotional and academic success and may be fostered and strengthened (Mattingly & Kraiger,2019). Academic achievement was previously only associated with cognitive intelligence and hard work, perseverance, and motivation (Ahmed et al., 2019, Mohzan et al.,2013). According to

Wang 2019, academic performance is also influenced by other factors, which are called non-cognitive factors. According to Reddy et al., 2018, college students face a variety of unique personal demands and obstacles, such as academic obligations, exam anxiety, peer relationship concerns, financial strain, and family issues. Emotional intelligence helps students deal with and handle their everyday challenges. Emotional intelligence influences students' academic and personal success and improves their emotional competencies in order to succeed in both settings (Santos et al., 2021).

Mayer and Salovey's (1997) model of Emotional Intelligence

Mayer and Salovey (1997) defined Emotional intelligence as being understood as the ability to perceive, value, and express emotions accurately, to access and generate feelings that facilitate thinking, to understand emotions and emotional knowledge, and to regulate emotions by promoting emotional and intellectual growth.

This model consists of four different models or branches. These are -

(a) Perceiving Emotion

(b) Facilitating Emotion with Thought

(c) Understanding Emotion

(d) Managing Emotions

(a) Perceiving Emotion

It involves obtaining and recognizing emotional information about one's own and others' feelings. This also involves accurately interpreting emotional expression. This component helps to identify one's own emotions and gain the ability to properly distinguish between them.

(b) Facilitating Emotion with Thought

This component involves cognitive processing of emotion, which helps in reasoning and problem solving. It involves focusing to the essential aspects and a range of emotions

and using them to drive more innovative endeavours and effective decision-making.

(c) Understanding Emotion

It is the person's ability to categorise emotions. It helps in understanding the meaning of others emotions and using that knowledge to identify the relationship between words and feelings. It involves the ability to identify changes in emotions.

(c) Managing Emotion

It is the ability to manage emotions in one and in others to function more effectively and to enhance emotional and intellectual growth. This branch of emotional intelligence helps to manage and cope with feelings successfully by enhancing pleasant emotions and moderating the negative ones.

1.2.2 Concept of Anxiety

Anxiety is one of the most prevalent psychological problems across the world. People's daily lives are significantly disrupted by anxiety, including sleep problems, addictive behaviours, poor academic performance, and worse quality of life in children (Li et al., 2022; Raknes et al., 2017). Due to a variety of social, psychological, and physiological changes, adolescents are particularly affected since they are under a lot of strain from their growing academic obligations as well as other internal stressors (Romano et al., 2020). College students deal with different academic anxiety like semester exams, difficulties completing their assignments, expectations for academic success, or an inability to understand their subjects. A little anxiety might be beneficial for studying because it can inspire people to learn. Studying is impeded by excessive anxiety since it hinders performance in an exam setting. Normal anxiety helps in being more physically and mentally active and more prepared to respond, but continuous and excessive anxiety makes behaviours and thoughts uncontrollable (Trigueros et al.,2020). One of the main triggers of exam anxiety is family and social pressure, in addition to personal pressure of obtaining high academic performance for a better

future outlook (Deb, S,; et al., 2015). Students with high emotional intelligence may be able to control their emotions, which enables them to deal with the stress associated with both their personal lives and academic obligations more effectively, which helps them in increasing academic achievement. They might be better able to handle academic anxiety.

Students have different expectations, goals, and values that they want to fulfill, which creates anxiety among college students. For the purpose of academic achievement, anxiety needs to be managed effectively.

Emotional intelligence is considered to be one of the strengths that equips the students to deal with anxiety. Teenagers who constantly compare themselves to others and their peers as a result of the growing academic demands and challenges tend to feel isolated, impulsive and depressed. Emotional intelligence helps to manage situations and demands in a better way by applying the abilities and opportunities with optimum understanding.

Factors related to Anxiety

Factors related to anxiety are as follows:

(i) Environmental and External factors

(ii) Medical factors

(iii) Substance use and abuse

(iv) Genetics

(v) Brain Chemistry

(i) Environmental and External factors

Environmental factors that are known to cause several types of anxiety include:

- Trauma from events such as abuse, victimization, or the death of a loved one.
- Stress in a personal relationship, marriage, friendship, and divorce
- Stress at work
- Stress from school

- Stress about finances and money
- Stress from a natural disaster
- Lack of oxygen in high-altitude areas

(ii) Medical factors

Anxiety is associated with medical factors such as anaemia, asthma, infections, and several heart condition. Some medically-related causes of anxiety include :

- Stress from a serious medical illness
- Side effects of medication
- Symptoms of a medical illness
- Lack of oxygen from emphysema or pulmonary embolism (a blood clot in the lung)

(iii) Substance use and abuse

It has been found out that about half of patients seeking mental health care for anxiety disorders such as GAD, panic disorder, or social phobia are due to alcohol or benzodiazepine dependence. More generally, anxiety is also known to arise from :

- Intoxication from an illicit drug, such as cocaine or amphetamines
- Withdrawal from an illicit drug, such as heroin, or from prescription drugs like Vicodin, benzodiazepines, or barbiturates

(iv) Genetics

It has been suggested that family history of anxiety or genetic predisposition increases the likelihood that a person will develop or have a greater chance of suffering from anxiety disorders.

(v) Brain Chemistry

Research has shown that people with abnormal levels of certain neurotransmitters in the brain are more likely to suffer from generalised anxiety disorder. When neurotransmitters are not

working properly, the brain's internal communication network breaks down, and the brain may react in an inappropriate way in some situations. This can lead to anxiety.

1.2.3 Concept of Academic stress

Academic stress (Akgun and Ciarrochi, 2003; Sun et al.,2013; Dan et al., 2021), which stems from subjective psychological distress in college life and in academic learning, has a negative impact on college students' mental health as well as the ability to complete their studies effectively. Stress is the psychological and physical changes in response to the pressure that are perceived as excessive and intolerable. Stress can be caused by high expectations from family or society, striving for perfection or having too many responsibilities. Academic stress is a type of stress when students are presented with academic expectations that exceeds their ability to adjust or too high for them to handle (Alsulami et al., 2018). Students face a variety of academic challenges including comprehending lectures, competing with peers, meeting parental and teacher expectations for academic performance, demonstrating subject matter expertise, finding accommodations and selecting friends (Maqsood,S., Bano, S., Goraa, J.T., & Sher, I., 2022). Students have different expectations, goals and values that they want to fulfill which creates stress among college students. For the purpose of academic achievement, academic stress and anxiety need to be managed effectively.

Academic stress can cause a variety of symptoms, such as :

I. Cognitive symptoms

II. Affective symptom

III. Social or Interpersonal symptoms

IV. Physical symptoms

V. Motivational symptoms

I. Cognitive symptoms

It includes difficulty in concentration, forget easily, day dream a lot, difficulty in problem

solving,

II. Affective symptoms

It includes feel inferior, lack of confidence, feel under pressure, worry about parents' expectations.

III. Social or Interpersonal symptoms

It includes get irritated with everyone, like to stay alone, don't want to talk anyone, develop a feeling that no one understands me.

IV. Physical symptoms

It includes get nervous, get headache, loss of appetite, loss of sleep.

V. Motivational symptoms

It includes get bored easily, lack of interest in activities that previously enjoyed, difficulty in completing lessons.

1.2.4 Concept of Gender differences

According to Sanchez-Nunez, Fernandez-Berrocal, Montanes & Latorre (2008) gender differences are brought about by the socialization process, and emotional education that both boys and girls get during their early years plays an important role in developing emotional intelligence. They believed that because females experience a greater range of emotions from their parents than boys do, they are better able to identify and communicate those emotions. Gender differences in academic achievement are a direct result of differences in students' long-term expectations. The effect of expectations, along with other socio-economic factors are important determinants of the gender gap in academic achievement (Fortin et al., 2015). Many previous studies have also demonstrated sex differences in academic anxiety. Das et al. (2014) found that girls have more academic anxiety and better academic performance than boys. Wang (2023) investigated the academic stress and anxiety of senior primary school students and found that girls had higher academic anxiety than boys.

1.2.5 Concept of Socio-economic status

A family's social and economic position within a social hierarchy is determined by its socio-economic background. A family's income, occupation, educational attainment, and place of residence are the factors that comprise their socio-economic background. Education develops skills, expands knowledge, instills moral values, and shape the personality. In any profession, highly skilled workers are required (Agnieszka Bates, 2019). The most significant determinant of children's academic success is their socio-economic status. It is commonly known that children of parents with higher and intermediate socio-economic status are exposed to a learning environment at home that is more favourable since these parents have greater learning resources available to them. Children's from low socio-economic status families typically perform poorly in academics, while the factors underlying this association are less clear (Giuseppe Gabrielli, et al., 2021). The child's personality is greatly influenced by the parent's wealth and educational attainment. Parents with a higher level of education are better equipped to assess their children's learning needs and aptitude. When parents have a strong financial base, they can best support their kids' academic potential by providing them with access to the newest resources and technology (Cheti Nicoletti & Valentina Tonei, 2020). In comparison to students whose parents have lower socio-economic status and a lower level of education, students whose parents have higher socio-economic status and a higher level of education may value learning, have more positive ability views, have a strong work orientation, and employ more successful learning practices (Ronnel B. King & Jose Eos Trinidad, 2021 and Ehsan Namaziandost & Fidel Cakmak, 2020). This ultimately helps them to have high emotional intelligence, experience less anxiety and stress and have high academic success.

Review of literature

Attri (2013) conducted a study to find out the difference between academic anxiety and academic achievement of male and female secondary school students. Data was collected from 200 secondary school students of Mandi district of Himachal Pradesh by random sampling and administering the Academic Anxiety Scale for Children (AASC) and their marks of 9th grade were taken as academic achievement. For this t-test was used. From this study, girls found to be more academically anxious and had better academic achievement than boys.

Das (2015) conducted a study to assess whether there existed any differences in emotional intelligence among post graduate students with respect to their gender. A standardized questionnaire was used to conduct the study and data was collected from 100 post graduate students using random sampling method. Emotional intelligence of the sample respondents was measured with the help of a scale developed by Hyde, Pethe, and Dhar (2002) consisting of 34 items. Data was analyzed using SPSS and the results indicated that the level of emotional intelligence among female students was higher than it was in male students.

Kauts (2016) studied academic stress and emotional intelligence among college students. For this study six degree colleges of Jalandhar city were selected randomly. From these six colleges 300 students were selected randomly for the study. Emotional intelligence scale (EIS) Anukool Hyde, Sanjyot Pethe and Upinder Char (2001) and Bisht Battery of stress scale (BBSS) by Abha Rani Bisht (Almora) were administered on selected sample. The data obtained was analyzed using descriptive statistics. Relevant means, S.D. t-value and ANOVA were computed to draw conclusion. It was found out that emotional intelligence of students has got significant effect on their academic stress. The students with low emotional intelligence reported high academic stress as compared to the students with high emotional intelligence.

Liu and Ren (2018) examined the relations among rumination, emotional intelligence, and anxiety, particularly focusing on whether emotional intelligence moderated the association between rumination and anxiety. A total of 439 undergraduates completed the instruments measuring rumination, emotional intelligence, and anxiety. Results of hierarchical regression analysis indicated that emotional intelligence moderated the association between rumination and anxiety. When participants reported the low level of emotional intelligence, they reported high rumination and greater anxiety.

Tran, Lam, & Legg, (2018) examined financial stress and general anxiety in college students (N = 304) with attention to the moderating roles of different types of social support (i.e., family support, social support) and gender. Results indicated that financial stress was moderately-to-strongly associated with symptoms of general anxiety. A three-way interaction revealed that perceived family support and gender were moderators of financial stress in relation to general anxiety. Consistent with a stress-buffering effect, for male college students financial strain was positively associated with general anxiety at low levels of perceived family support, but unrelated at high levels of family support. For female college students, a significant financial stress–anxiety link was present regardless of level of family support. This study highlights the potential mental health costs of financial stress faced by college students, with implications for tailoring mental health interventions that target financial stress.

Kant (2019) conducted a study to explore the level of emotional intelligence of University's students and to find out the difference between emotional intelligence on the basis of gender, locality, level of course and school of study on 200 students of Central University of South Bihar, Gaya, India. Results indicated that all university students were having high level of emotional intelligence. Result indicates that male and female students are significantly differed from each other on Emotional Intelligence. Female students found more emotionally

intelligent with high mean value. UG and PG students of were found not significantly differ from each other on Emotional intelligence.

Rai & Yaden (2020) studied the impact of emotional intelligence among the college students with special reference to their subject stream. Total Sample of the study was 100, in which male comprised of 50 and female were 50 among the college students. Survey method was used to collect the data. Roqan Emotional Intelligence Test by Dr. Roquiya Zainuddin and Anjum Ahmed research tool was used. Findings indicated that the five dimensions of emotional Intelligence- self-awareness, self –regulation, motivation, empathy and social skills plays a pivotal role in EI. The study revealed emotional intelligence between Arts and Science college students differed significantly. In terms of emotional intelligence, Science college students of Science stream had a good score.

Chokshi, et al., (2021) conducted this study to find the comparative magnitude of occurrence and severity of depression, anxiety, and stress in the science and non-science stream among twelfth standard students. This cross-sectional, comparative study was carried out in three different schools of Ahmedabad. For this study was 460 students of twelfth standard from all streams were taken. A sociodemographic questionnaire along with DASS-42 was distributed. The scores were calculated and percentage, mean scores, standard deviation, p values, odds ratio were obtained. A statistically significant difference was seen in the mean scores of depression and anxiety among science and non-science students ($p<0.005$). Students belonging to science stream showed more depression and anxiety overall as well as when compared on basis of age groups. Similar results were also observed among science students who said it was not their own decision to choose their stream. Anxiety was found to be higher in science students from nuclear families where as depression was higher in those from joint

family. On the contrary, occurrence of all states was found to be more in females of non-science field as compared to science field.

Kumari & Singh (2022) studied the difference in the level of academic stress experienced by the senior secondary school students in terms of their gender, type of school and stream of subject. For the study, descriptive research design was adopted and for sampling, purposive random sampling was selected from 120 secondary school students of senior secondary schools in Patna district. The study revealed that there exists a significant difference between the academic stress of male and female students. Female students were found to be more stressed than male, and between private Government and missionary school students. However no significant difference was found in the academic stress level of the students of science, arts and commerce stream students.

Naushad (2022) conducted research on adolescents belonging to different levels of socio-economic status and family environment differ in their emotional intelligence, academic stress, and academic achievement. The study was conducted on a sample of 858 adolescents studying in various secondary schools in Aligarh district in Uttar Pradesh state, India. Standard scales were employed for data collection. Multiple analysis of variance (MANOVA) was applied to observe the effect. The homogeneity of covariance matrices was verified. Results revealed that socio-economic status and family environment have significant effects on emotional intelligence, academic stress, and academic achievement.

2.0 Problem to be investigated

To study emotional intelligence, anxiety and academic stress among undergraduate students of colleges in Ranchi on the basis of gender (male and female), socio-economic status (high and low) and stream (Arts and commerce).

3.0 Objectives of the investigation and motivation

The following are objectives of the study

- To find out the levels of emotional intelligence, anxiety and academic stress among the total sample and sample sub-group of undergraduate students of Ranchi.
- To study the impact of gender (male and female), socio-economic status (high and low) and stream (Arts and commerce) on emotional intelligence, anxiety and academic stress of undergraduate students.
- To examine the relationship between emotional intelligence, anxiety and academic stress in relation to gender, socio-economic status and stream.

Motivation

In the present era teens are increasingly exposed to stressors quickly after enrolling in college, due to unfamiliar academic subjects, adjustment in a new setting, interacting with new classmates and thinking about future job goals. Excessive anxiety and stress leads to poor academic performance despite having subject matter expertise. In academic setting students can perform better by regulating their emotions. Emotional intelligence helps the students to label and comprehend their emotions and also helps to reduce anxiety and stress that comes with managing strong emotions. So there should be a correlation among emotional intelligence, anxiety, and academic stress. That is why researcher is motivated to study relationship among emotional intelligence, anxiety, and academic stress of undergraduate students.

4.0 Research Hypothesis

The following hypothesis has been formulated for the present study:

1. The levels of emotional intelligence, anxiety, and academic stress will vary among different sample sub-groups of undergraduate students.

2. There will be a significant effect of gender, socio-economic status and stream on the emotional intelligence of undergraduate students.
3. There will be a significant effect of gender, socio-economic status and stream on the anxiety level of undergraduate students.
4. There will be a significant effect of gender, socio-economic status and stream on the academic stress of undergraduate students.
5. Emotional intelligence, anxiety and academic stress will be related to each other.
    - Emotional intelligence and anxiety will be negatively related to each other
    - Anxiety and academic stress will be positively related to each other.
    - Emotional intelligence and academic stress will be negatively related to each other.

5.0 Research Design and Methodology

The Sample

The sample of the study will be selected from different colleges located in Ranchi district, Jharkhand. The selection of the sample will be based on stratified random sampling technique. The sample for the study will be 240 undergraduate students. It will be based on gender (male and female), socio-economic status (high and low), and stream (Arts and commerce) . There will be 8 sub-groups based on 2x2x2 factorial design, and each group consists of 30 participants.

The factors of stratification are :

- Gender (Male and Female)
- Socio-economic status (High - Annual income above 1 lakh and Low - Annual income below 1 lakh)
- Stream (Arts and Commerce)

Table-I

Sample Design

Gender	Socio-economic status	Stream	
		Arts	Commerce
Male	High	30	30
	Low	30	30
Female	High	30	30
	Low	30	30
Subtotal		120	120
Total		240	

Variables

The following variables will be selected for the present study :

Independent Variables

- Gender (Male and Female)
- Socio-economic status (High and Low)
- Stream (Arts and Commerce)

Dependent Variables

- Emotional Intelligence
- Anxiety
- Academic Stress

Control Variables

- College students of Ranchi district only
- Undergraduate students

- Participants age range 18-23 years

Inclusion and exclusion Criteria

Inclusion Criteria

- Undergraduate (Arts and Commerce) college students
- Both gender (male and female) college students
- Socio-economic status includes both high and low

Exclusion Criteria

- Post graduate college students
- Intermediate Students
- Age ranges (below 18 and above 23)

6.0 Tools to be used for collection of data

1. Personal Data Questionnaire
2. Mangal Emotional Intelligence Inventory
3. Sinha Anxiety Scale by Durganand Sinha
4. Academic Stress Scale

Description and purpose of the tools

(1) Personal data questionnaire

Personal data questionnaire was prepared by the researcher for this study to obtain personal data information about the respondent's name, age, sex, religion, domicile, education, stream, family income, and family structure.

(2) Mangal Emotional Intelligence Inventory (Mangal and Mangal, 2006)

Mangal Emoional Intelligence Inventory (MEII) was developed by Mangal and Mangal (2006) comprising 100 items measuring four areas of emotional intelligence , intra-personal awareness (knowing one’s own emotion), inter-personal awareness (knowing about other’s emotion), intra-personal management (managing one’s own emotion), inter-personal

management (managing other's emotion) respectively. Twenty five items have been developed for each four components of emotional intelligence and for each statement there are two possible responses either Yes or No. The scale can be used in individuals aged 16 years and above. The reliability of MEII was determined by the test-retest method was 0.92, the split-half method was 0.89 and K-R formula was 0.90. The validity of MEII was found 0.62.

(3) Sinha Anxiety Scale (Sinha, 1961)

The Sinha Anxiety Scale developed by Sinha in 1961. It is a self report questionnaire designed to measure anxiety levels in individuals aged 16 years and above. The scale consists of 100 items. The scale has been developed and standardised on Indian population. Each item has to respond in either Yes or No. The administration time for the test is no time limit but it usually takes 15-20 minutes. The reliability by the split-half method was 0.86. Applying Spearman Brown Formula the index was found to be 0.92 indicating good reliability. The test retest reliability was found 0.75. The validity of the scale is 0.69.

(4) Academic Stress Scale (Rajendran & Kaliappan, 1990)

Academic Stress Scale was originally developed and standardised by Kim (1970). The scale was adopted to Indian conditions by Rajendran & Kaliappan (1990) and Rao (2012). The Academic Stress Scale can be used with students 18-25 years. The academic stress scale consists of 40 items. There were five options for each item, ranging from "No stress" to "Extreme stress." Each option is assigned a score of 0, 1, 2, 3, 4 respectively. The scale was classified into five categories and each categories comprised 8 items. The scale includes five components, i.e., Personal inadequacy, Fear of failure, Interpersonal difficulties with teachers, Teacher-pupil relationship / teaching methods, Inadequate study facilities. Each item has a score ranging from 0 to 4. Therefore, 160 is the maximum possible score. The reliability coefficient was calculated using test-retest reliability and found to be 0.82.

7.0 Analysis of data

The following statistical analysis will be used to analyse the obtained data

- **Percentage values** will be calculated to find out the level of emotional intelligence, anxiety, and academic stress of different sub groups of undergraduate students.
- **ANOVA** will be calculated for emotional intelligence, anxiety, and academic stress on gender, socio-economic status, and stream of undergraduate students.
- **t-test** will be calculated to find out the impact of gender, socio-economic status and stream on emotional intelligence, anxiety, and academic stress of undergraduate students
- **Coefficient of correlation** of emotional intelligence, anxiety, and academic stress will be calculated of undergraduate students.
- **Graphical representation** of the results will be drawn.

8.0 Significance of the study

This study would prove revolutionary in understanding why students feel anxious during exams, get stressed, and sometimes feel unmotivated. Emotional intelligence equips the students to deal with anxiety by enhancing their ability to cope with the academic stress. People with high emotional intelligence can experience increased self-awareness, self-regulation, and improved mental health and also can build stronger relationships with their teachers and classmates. They can also be more resilient to stress. Proper coping strategies and mechanisms can be helpful to improve psychological well-being and academic achievement and reduce anxiety levels and academic stress at the same time among university students. Emotional intelligence will help students become successful in their fields.

9.0 Its relevance to the present day problem and need to the society

Emotional intelligence is the ability to recognize, understand and manage our own emotions

and emotions of others. Emotional intelligence enhances communication, problem-solving, and improving relationships within groups. Emotional intelligence also plays a crucial role in managing stress and navigating conflicts. Emotional intelligence can help people understand and appreciate cultural differences, which can lead to more inclusive and tolerant societies. People with high emotional intelligence can better understand the nature of problems in society and come up with possible solutions. Emotional intelligence can help people recognize emotions that are unrelated to a problem and influence their decisions.

10.0 Contribution to the existing knowledge

The above study will contribute to gaining knowledge about the significance of emotional intelligence, anxiety, and academic stress in relation to their gender, socio-economic status, and stream. Implementing instructional approaches that promote cooperation and communication can create a learning atmosphere that is favourable for the cultivation of emotional intelligence. Offering resources for counseling programmes and assistance for stress management, coping mechanisms, and emotional control can greatly enhance the psychological well-being and academic achievement of students.

11.0 Future work

A similar study could be conducted with a large sample size. In order to generalise the findings, a larger sample should be drawn from the population. In future we can play interventions to increase emotional intelligence. There are some mediating factors, like loving and caring parents and teacher-student communication, that can mediate the effect. Psychological training has the potential to improve mental health. The inclusion of some sort of psychological training in the college/university curriculum could lead to a wide variety of positive outcomes and ultimately enhance emotional intelligence.

Chapterization

1. Introduction
2. Review of literature
3. Methodology
4. Analsis of data
5. Summary and conclusion
6. References

Note: It is a Tentative Structure of the Synopsis minor modification may be made depending upon the nature of the data obtained.

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